



## THE COUNTY OF KAUAI

DEREK S. K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR

MICHAEL A. DAHLIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR

### News Release

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#### **KPD recognizes Sexual Assault Awareness Month**

LĪHU'E — Kaua'i Police Department employees wore denim to work on Wednesday in recognition of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Denim Day, which occurs every April, provides an opportunity for Kaua'i police to show their support to survivors of abuse and to increase awareness about how the community can continue to work together to reduce sexual violence.

"Our department had some community activities that were planned this month to help raise awareness for sexual assault and rape survivors but they were canceled due to the pandemic," said Investigative Services Bureau Capt. Paul Applegate. "This was one thing that we could still do to show our support to survivors and to remind our community about the many different resources we have available for them. We also wanted to send the message that it doesn't matter what an individual is wearing in order for a sexual assault crime to be committed."

KPD has a number of resources available for sexual assault survivors. Victims are encouraged to call dispatch at 241-1711 or 911 in the event of an emergency. Survivors can also contact Gina Kaulukukui, KPD's domestic violence coordinator, at 241-1695.

Additionally, survivors can call the YWCA's 24/7 sexual assault crisis line at 245-4144.

The Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN) also has a 24/7 National Sexual Assault Hotline, 800-656-HOPE (4673), where victims are put in touch with a trained staff member.



Denim Day began in 1999 after a ruling by the Italian Supreme Court that overturned a rape conviction against the 45-year-old suspect. The justices stated that the 18-year-old victim was wearing tight jeans so she must have helped her perpetrator remove them, implying consent.

Afterwards, there was an outcry from people around the world who understood that violence, threats and coercion often coincide with the act of sexual assault. Women in the Italian Parliament showed up to work the next day wearing jeans in solidarity with the victim. This show of support continues now every year around the world as Denim Day.

April is also National Child Abuse Prevention Month and is recognized annually at KPD by placing pinwheels around the Līhu'e headquarters. The ceremony wasn't held this year due to COVID-19 but the message remains the same: to remain vigilant of abusive behavior against keiki and to report incidents by calling the YWCA 24-hour hotline at 245-6362 or KPD Dispatch at 241-1711. In the event of an emergency, call 911.

Visit [kauai.gov/police](http://kauai.gov/police) and click on the "Domestic Violence" tab for more information and resources.



**Photo courtesy of KPD: Officers wore jeans on April 29 in support of survivors of sexual assault and rape.**

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